

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 115685
ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 JUSE-00 L-03 FTC-01
TRSE-00 OMB-01 STR-07 COME-00 SP-02 CIAE-00
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ICA-11 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00 SS-15 /124 R

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PARIS FOR USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EIND, JA

SUBJECT: IBM JAPAN: POSSIBLE ANTI-MONOPOLY VIOLATION

1. APRIL 27 WALL STREET JOURNAL REPORTS THAT IBM JAPAN HAS
PREMATURELY ANNOUNCED A NEW MEDIUM-SIZE COMPUTER SYSTEM,
AND THAT JAPANESE AUTHORITIES ARE INVESTIGATING POSSIBILITY
THAT IBM MAY THEREBY HAVE VIOLATED ANTI-MONOPOLY LAWS.

2. THE JOURNAL ARTICLE STATES THAT EMPLOYEES OF IBM JAPAN,
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IN VIOLATION OF COMPANY POLICY FORBIDDING DISCUSSION OF
UNANNOUNCED NEW PRODUCTS OUTSIDE THE COMPANY, HAVE BEEN
TRYING TO PROMOTE SALES OF A NEW FAMILY OF COMPUTERS TO BE
KNOWN AS THE SERIES E WHICH WILL REPLACE MODELS 115-2 AND
125-2 OF THE SYSTEM 370 SERIES. CITING THE ASAHI SHIMBUN,
THE ARTICLE STATES THAT IBM SALESMEN IN JAPAN EMPHASIZED
TO CUSTOMERS THAT THE NEW SERIES WOULD BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY

AND COULD BE SHIPPED AS EARLY AS NEXT SPRING. THE NEW MACHINES REPORTEDLY HAVE TWICE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE COMPUTERS THEY WILL REPLACE BUT WILL SELL AT ABOUT THE SAME PRICE. THE PREMATURE SALES EFFORT, WHICH WAS UNCOVERED BY AN IBM INVESTIGATION, APPEARS TO HAVE PROMPTED MITI AND JFTC TO BEGIN INQUIRIES TO DETERMINE WHETHER ANTI-MONOPOLY LAWS HAVE BEEN VIOLATED.

3. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE LEARNING WHAT INFORMATION YOU CAN GATHER ON THIS MATTER. IN PARTICULAR, DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT AS TO WHETHER SERIOUS INQUIRY ON ANTI-MONOPOLY VIOLATION IS BEING MADE. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

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